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FARM TELEPHONES

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OVER ONE-HALF OF U. S. FARMS HAVE TELEPHONES

For the first time in history over one-half of the farmers in the United States have telephone service, according to an annual survey made in 1956 by the Crop Reporting Board. According to this survey 51.9 percent of the farms, or about 2½ million, had some type of telephone service on July 1, 1956. This compares with 49.2 percent in 1955 and 38.2 percent in 1950. The percentage of American farms with telephones has increased steadily since 1940 when only 25 percent of the farms had telephone service (see table 1). However in the 20 years prior to 1940 the percentage of farms with telephones had declined sharply. The increase of 2.7 percentage points between 1955 and 1956 was the greatest of record for any one year since annual data became available.

Percent of Farms with Telephone Service, United States, July 1
Selected Years
1912 - 1956

Year	Percent	Year	Percent
1912	29.4	1949	36.4
1920 <u>1/</u>	38.7	1950 <u>1/</u>	38.2
1930 <u>1/</u>	34.0	1951	39.6
1940 <u>1/</u>	25.0	1952	41.8
1945 <u>1/</u>	31.8	1953	44.2
1947	33.7	1954	46.7
1948	34.6	1955	49.2
		1956	51.9

1/Bureau of Census, Department of Commerce.

All geographic regions and all States showed an increase in 1956 over the previous year. The South Atlantic and South Central regions were the only regions where less than 50 percent of the farms still do not have telephones. These regions showed the greatest increases, both in percentage and in number. The greater proportion of farms (83 percent) in the New England States have telephones than in any other region. In the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific regions, between 78 and 79 percent of the farms had telephones.

Percent of Farms with Telephones
By Regions, 1950 - 1956

Region	Percent farms with telephones		Region	Percent farms with telephones	
	1950	1956		1950	1956
New England	73	84	E. S. Central	13	27
Mid Atlantic	62	79	W. S. Central	20	36
E. N. Central	60	73	Mountain	44	60
W. N. Central	62	70	Pacific	56	78
S. Atlantic	15	30	U. S.	38.3	51.9

Of the 48% who do not have telephone service, 9% of the farmers indicated that the house is wired for telephone or could be by extending the line a few yards, thirteen percent had a telephone line within 0.2 to 0.5 miles of the house, seven percent had lines with in 0.6 to 1 mile, ten percent were from 1.1 to 3 miles from a telephone line, seven percent were from 3.1 to 10 miles from a line, and two percent were over 10 miles from the nearest telephone line.

These estimates were based on reports from nearly 22,000 farmers throughout the United States. The list of farmers to whom the questionnaires were sent was a cross section, unbiased sample of all farms in the United States.

